

multi-faith [spaces]

Symptoms and Agents of Religious and Social Change

Newsletter #2

8 August 2012

Welcome to the latest Multi-Faith Spaces Newsletter

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Our Definition

"MFS are intentionally created spaces, designed to house a variety of religious practices, in addition to addressing more or less clearly defined faith requirements and social purposes. This definition covers single spaces, or complexes of spaces within a particular area."

Get Involved

We are always eager to hear from individuals or organisations who are interested in our research. If you use or represent a multi-faith space that you think would be of interest, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

mfs@manchester.ac.uk

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who might be interested in our work. Past editions can be found [here](#).

Multi-Faith Spaces: Symptoms and Agents of Religious and Social Change is a three year research project based at the *Manchester Architecture Research Centre (MARC)*.

The project considers multi-faith space as both emerging from our multi-cultural and religiously diverse societies, as well as active in the facilitation of community, dialogue and toleration. These processes are researched from a material perspective, viewing multi-faith spaces (MFS) as primarily works of architecture, shaped through the actions of many stakeholders: users, designers, architects, engineers, artists, chaplains, academics, facilities managers, diversity officers, etc.

The project has visited over 200 MFS in the United Kingdom and beyond. It has employed a host of research techniques; site visits, interviews, measured drawings, participant observation, questionnaires, focus groups, and the gathering of visual data. To date the project has amassed over 14,000 tagged photographs.

As we begin to write up our findings, we will keep you informed via a regular newsletter. For further information about the project, please visit our website at www.manchester.ac.uk/mfs.

Conference Outputs

On March 21st and 22nd over 150 delegates – academics, chaplains, architects, policy makers and other stakeholders - attended our international conference.

Videos from the conference have now been uploaded, including contributions from our international plenary speakers (*seated left to right, next to Dr Ralf Brand*):

Victor Kazanjian (*Wellesley College, Massachusetts*)

Carol Phillips (*Moriyama & Teshima Architects, Toronto*)

Eugen Eckert (*Goethe University, Frankfurt*)

Please visit our [website](#) to access these, and other presentations. We hope to add further materials in the coming months.

In addition to the conference presentations, we have also placed online a number of specially commissioned podcasts. These were produced, in conjunction with the *Religion & Society Programme*, by former BBC Radio 4 producer Norman Winter.



Exhibition Update



Our project exhibition has begun to tour, recently visiting:

Cambridge: Central Library, University Centre and Great St. Mary's Church

London: St Alphege Hall (Southwark)

In addition, we have produced a 'light-weight' version of the exhibition, suitable for long distance transportation or short-term use, and we are also able to now offer various formats to purchase, at cost, via our designer.

Regularly updated information, exhibition photographs, and details of forthcoming venues - alongside exhibition text and some selected images - are available on our special [exhibition website](#).

If you would like to host the exhibition, or know of any suitable venues, please [contact us](#).

You can also download a [colour brochure](#). (*hard copies available on request*)

(left to right: Central Library, St, Alphege Hall, Great St. Mary's)



Article: London Seminars

In each newsletter we will present a short article or case study that has emerged from our research. Please [contact us](#) if you would like to contribute an article.

Over 100 people visited the Multifaith Spaces exhibition (9th - 13th July), hosted by the *London Boroughs Faiths Network* at St Alphege Hall (London SE1). Dr Chris Hewson, Imam Yunus Dudhwala, Revd Dr Howard Worsley and Helen Sanderson contributed to the opening event. Planning officers, chaplains, academics, multifaith activists and design professionals viewed the exhibition together, learning from the research presented, and comparing notes.

Four workshops tackled practical issues and policy implications: in prisons, police premises and secure mental health units;

at universities and colleges of further education; in hospitals; and at airports and commercial premises. Detailed discussions included the conversion of chapels, seating arrangements, making the case for 'shared space' to management, the achievement of fair and equitable access, alongside many practical issues (e.g. ligature points).



Photo taken by Phoebe Robertson for LBFN

Comments included:

"It has provoked thought, inspired and warned!"

"Excellent study & exhibition – will be a fine legacy for future work."

Catriona Robertson (LBFN Convener) noted: *"Nobody knows exactly how many multifaith spaces there are in London, but there is an appetite for learning about their evolving role and the impact they have. The exhibition brought practitioners together, sharing expertise and experience. We will be holding a follow up event in 2013."*

Visit: www.lbfm.wordpress.com



Online Survey

As we write up our research, we are still keen to hear **your views** on the multifaith spaces you are familiar with (or have visited), and 'multifaith space' more generally.

Whilst we are always happy to correspond via the normal channels, we have also put together an online survey that permits a more structured collection of data.

We have designed the survey, so that brief or detailed responses are possible (and identifying information can be kept to a minimum). Naturally, **any** data we take from the survey will be anonymised within future research outputs.

Please click [HERE](#) to take the survey.

It is hoped that the survey will help us scope a wide range of viewpoints, including: those working at the forefront of multifaith provision; those who feel unsure about the issues involved; and even those who may be wary about these new forms of 'faith space'.

We would be grateful if you could forward this survey to your networks and contacts.

All completed entries will be entered into a random prize draw, with **three £50 Amazon gift vouchers to be won**.

If you have any questions, or would like to receive paper copies of this survey, please [contact us](#).

